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REMARKS AT TIME OF SWEARING INTO OFFICE
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During the election, I had to stop telling lawyer jokes because I didn't want to call attention to the fact that I was a lawyer. But now that I have been elected, I can return to some bad old habits, and I can ask you "what do lawyers use for birth control...personality."

I have frequently been asked what three or four goals I want to achieve in the next four years. My response has been that there is one goal that sums it up: that Arizona students learn substantially more than they have been learning, and that this is demonstrable by higher test scores.

To achieve this goal, the Department of Education will be primarily a service organization, helping school districts and charter schools achieve more academic success. The Department is also an organization that assures compliance, and we will have to be conscientious about that, but the compliance function will be secondary. The primary function is service.

This can be seen in my appointments. The entire upper level executive team resigned after the election, and I had to appoint all new people. The people appointed all have extensive experience as teachers, principals, and district administrators, and a record of success, so that they will be able to provide instructional leadership. In fact, the four people who supervise the substantive educational areas of the Department have, between them, 125 years of experience as teachers, principals, and administrators. This is a new look for the Department, and carries a message as to what the goals will be.

In addition to providing educational leadership from the Department, we will be looking to identify outstanding teachers, principals, and administrators in the school districts, to help other districts achieve academic excellence.

To be a good leader one must be a good listener. After the election, I felt I had done a lot of talking for a year and a half, and it was time to do some listening. I met with 150 school superintendents, in three groups of 50 each; partly to answer questions, but primarily to hear their ideas. Some of them stood up and presented me with 11 point plans. I had my trusty yellow pad, and dutifully wrote it all down, anxious to include their ideas, in the mix that we develop at the department. I then had similar meetings at the teachers' association, the school board association, and with several business groups. Obviously, I start out with a number of ideas of my own, some of which I'll be speaking about today, but we will want to continue, for the four years, to be collecting ideas from all parts of the education community and the general community, including you.

It is my hope that the Department of Education will be a place of intellectual passion and ferment, processing many ideas, and effectively implementing the best of them.

Now let me talk to you about a few of my ideas as to how we achieve academic excellence for students throughout Arizona. During the campaign, my consultant told me that I was not allowed to talk about more than three ideas in any one speech. But now that the election is over, I can do whatever I want, and I'm going to talk about eight! And there will be a test afterwards!

First, we must restore classroom discipline. When teachers are not supported in disciplining disruptive students, some teachers tend to give up. That has led to anarchy in some public schools across the country. Other teachers keep trying, but valuable time is diverted from teaching the students who want to learn. Restoring classroom discipline is a necessary precondition to creating a learning atmosphere, to facilitate academic excellence.

Second, for students who come to school not speaking English, the first priority is that they must learn English as fast as possible. Then there is no limit to their ability, as individuals, to achieve academic excellence. My support for English immersion has been vindicated by the most recent edition of *Education Next*, a research publication of Harvard, Stanford, and two research institutions. It found that students who had been in English immersion outperformed students who had been in bilingual programs, in that they stayed in school longer, more of them entered college, had a higher annual income, and they had a higher rate of entry into high-status occupations by a factor of almost two to one.

My appointment of Margaret Garcia-Dugan, one of the co-chairs of English for the Children, as an Associate Superintendent, makes clear that I will keep my campaign promise to enforce the initiative, under which English immersion is to take the place of bilingual. But it is not enough to enforce the initiative. We must make sure that every school is serious about teaching English as intensely, and as rapidly as possible. Once students become truly proficient in English, we will be supportive of efforts to have them maintain their proficiency in the second language as well.

Third, on the AIMS test, we will urge that only reasonable skills and knowledge be required to pass the test and obtain a standard high school diploma. Those demonstrating higher skills should receive honors endorsements, differentiated diplomas, and tuition waivers for those at the very top.

But, to obtain a standard high school diploma, only reasonable skills and knowledge should be required, so students who have passed legitimate course work, should be able to pass the test.

That being said, we must maintain (with an iron will) the 2006 deadline for requiring that students pass a reasonable test to graduate. Knowing that the test must be passed, helps teachers focus more intently on academics, and more important, helps them persuade students and their parents that the students must do their work if they are to obtain a diploma. Postponements have caused students to blow off the test and there should be no more postponements.

Concern has been expressed that teachers will teach too narrowly to the test. I grew up in New York, where we had the Regents test, the New York equivalent of the AIMS. At the end of

the year, there would be more of an emphasis on the Regents, but during the year, the teachers showed good sense and taught other materials as well. Part of our job will be to find ways to discourage teachers from over reacting and teaching too narrowly to the test.

But consider what it is that we are testing. For example, students must be able to read a paragraph and comprehend it. There is no way to teach to that, except to have students do a lot of reading, not only in English class, but in social studies, science, and other classes. They also need to do a lot of writing to pass the writing portion of the test. Those things are all positive.

Montini wrote in the newspaper last week that everyone in Arizona knew that AIMS was not working, except me! Everyone but me! I believe that is a mistaken perception. I believe the public wants reasonable tests, and wants to be sure that we no longer graduate any students who cannot read their own diplomas.

A book that I recommend is this one: *No Excuses*. It is the study of the common elements in 21 high-performing, high-poverty schools. These are schools where the demographics would predict that they would be in the 35th percentile, and they are in the 65th percentile or higher. All of these schools had strong principals. There were six common traits among the principals. Let me read you part of the four common traits:

Rigorous and regular testing leads to continuous student achievement.

Modern-day reform jargon speaks of assessment and accountability. Principals of high-performing schools speak of testing.

High expectation without a means of measurement are hollow. Testing is the diagnostic tool that best enforces a school's goals. Regular testing at all levels and in all areas ensures that teaching and learning of the prescribed curriculum are taking place in every classroom.

If you want to know the other five traits of these successful principals in high-performing high-poverty schools ... you'll have to read the book.

In talking about AIMS, we are talking about accountability of students. My fourth point is the other half of academic accountability: accountability of schools. As someone who fought, when I was in the legislature, for better funding of public education, I am persuaded that a precondition is a belief, not only among legislators, but among the public in general, that our schools are being held accountable, and that we are getting one hundred cents of distance run out of every dollar spent on the schools.

As with the AIMS test, modifications may be needed. A first-rate teacher may make substantial progress with students from an economically poor background, and still not reach the absolute levels of students who come from economically rich homes. We must study not only the absolute levels, but how much progress is made in a year. In studying this, we may find that the State accountability system provides inadequately for this factor. The federal accountability system does not provide for it at all.

More important, we must broaden the system. Right now, what is being studied is what is being done to bring the students who are below the proficiency level up to proficiency. But a successful education system must motivate and stimulate the brightest students and the average students, and not just focus on bringing up the students at the bottom. We have to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time.

Fifth point: We must restore funding to the classroom and avoid wasteful administration. I have proposed that no district spend more than five percent of its budget on administration. This can be achieved, in part, by consolidation, unification, and other ways to achieve economies of scale. The money should be spent in the classroom, where the taxpayers expect it to be spent: on better teacher compensation and small class size.

Sixth, to achieve academic excellence, we must focus in part on the substance of the courses that are taught. Let me give you two examples.

The first is history. Under the current history standards, our high school students do not learn about the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Revolutionary War or the ideas on which this country was founded. The last time they learned those things is in the seventh grade when they are 13 years old, and in my view, not mature enough absorb these important concepts. High school history is to start with the Civil War. The same is true in World History of the Greco-Roman basis for western civilization: The last time students would learn this is in the sixth grade when they were 12 years old, and high school history is to start with the Renaissance. Our high school students must learn about the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Revolutionary War, the ideas on which this country was founded, and the Greco-Roman basis of western civilization.

The second point about substance, and my seventh issue, has to do with the teaching of reading. One of my heroes is E.D. Hirsch, the founder of the Core Knowledge movement. I was so inspired by his book, *The Schools We Need and Why We Do Not Have Them*, that when I was in the legislature, I used to photocopy chapters and send them out to people. Hirsch is an adversary of the progressive school movement. Since we have proponents of that movement in our schools of education herein Arizona, there should be some lively debates coming. The progressive movement has de-emphasized the teaching of substance, in favor of teaching people how to learn, critical thinking, etc. But according to Hirsch, there is no way to acquire those skills without a great deal of knowledge. The more you know about something, the easier it is to learn new things about it. Knowledge is like Velcro, giving more ability to hang new information on what you already know. I recently saw him give a speech in which he said that the battle between phonics and whole language has been pretty much won by phonics, and the new battle will be about substance. Students learn to read by reading, and if they are going to be reading anyway, they may as well get substance in what they are reading. The reading materials should be rich in substance about social studies, science, literature, and not empty stories.

The eighth point is that we should be teaching character education. The philosopher Bertram Russell has written that the good life is one that is inspired by love and guided by knowledge. By love, here, he means good intentions. Good intentions without knowledge is

ineffective. But knowledge without good intentions, without character, is dangerous, and can do more harm than good. Some of our schools have successful character education programs, across the curriculum, which emphasize universal core values like integrity, responsibility, citizenship, caring, and peaceful resolution of conflicts. If the value for the week is integrity, the students write papers on integrity, have discussions about integrity, and so on. This should be statewide. To avoid an unfunded mandate, the Department of Education should develop a program which is available free to the schools.

These are a sampling of some of the ideas we will be working with as we strive for one overriding goal: that our students learn more.

After I won the election, a lot of people told me they didn't know whether to offer congratulations or condolences, and a lot of people have asked me why I would leave a law practice to do this job. I have found some lines in a play by George Bernard Shaw that express how I feel:

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself in making you happy.

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

Finally, if we succeed in reaching our goal, it will be through teamwork. Teamwork with the Executive Staff and the rest of the Department of Education; teamwork with teachers, principals and district administrators throughout Arizona; teamwork with business and other groups who care about education. So, I want to close with a quotation from one of my favorite books. It's by Catherine Drinker Bowen, who became a great writer of history books. But this was her first book, and it was called *Friend and Fiddlers*, about playing chamber music, but conveying ideas about teamwork, which I believe apply here:

...music, alone among the arts, possess – a warm, a satisfying friendliness. All the other arts are lonely. We paint alone – *my* picture, *my* interpretation of the sky. *My* poem, *my* novel. But in music – ensemble music, not soloism – we share. No altruism this, for we receive tenfold what we give. Our fiddle bow draws out high C; gives it out, thin and true and long, to three other fiddlers under the lamp. And back it comes, realized, made authentic by the viola G, the clean, the vigorous fifth, softened by the second violin's E flat, - pleasant, drowsy minor interval! – strengthened now by the cello's deep tonic C, the full chest burr of his open string. The chord dies; and the four of you sit silent, smiling. The first fiddler nods. "Not so bad," he says. "not – so – bad."

